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For a social system based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation—against State control and all forms of government and economic repression. To establish a share in the general prosperity for all—the breaking down of racial, religious, national and sex barriers—and to fight for the life of one world.

LETTERS

Dear Comrades,
The otherwise excellent article 'Council Workers Fight Back' in the July Black Flag *has a defence of the Race Relations and Feminist parasitocracy which really belongs in* Labour Briefing.

The author claims that local authority Race and Women's Units are the product of 'the struggle of black people and women'. Nonsense! They were conceived and established by trendy Labour councillors and are staffed by their friends. They do nothing for ordinary black people or working women, nor were they ever intended to. Their objective is to co-opt a layer of black petty bourgeois who are about as useful to black workers as were the institutions set up by the Nazis to police the ghettos were to Jewish ones. I wonder if 'An Anarcho-syndicalist council worker' has ever actually met one of the cynical or demented bureaucrats who run these local patronage macgines?

In private discussion, left wing Labourites concede that giving their friends highly paid jobs as race advisors does little for ordinary black workers, but mumble something about 'having to make a start somewhere'. They have always believed in revolution from above and regard the idea that workers might act for themselves as a pleasant but unrealistic fantasy.

Surely syndicalists see that women and blacks are fully part of the working class, not a collection of unfortunates who need a Right On! bureaucracy to look after them.

Fraternally
J.S. (Bristol)

REPLY: The Race and Sex relations bureaucracy is the response of the Labour Party to the struggles of the late seventies and early eighties. The fact that it is intended to replace these struggles does not make it any less a product of them. Despite the claims of the municipal left, all it is capable of in reality is to formalise what people have already won for themselves by action. I do not deny that such units give high paid jobs to the Labour Party's friends and there have been some blatant examples of such patronage, eg Linda Bellos' high paid advisors' job in Hackney.

However, contrary to his speculation, I have met some of the workers who staff such Race and Women's Units, and I must say they are NOT all cynical or demented bureaucrats (although whether they are or not is beside the point). Neither are they all particularly highly paid—in any bureaucracy there is a top and a bottom. Our defence of these workers against attacks (from both Tory and Labour bosses) is not because we approve of the job they do, but because we don't approve of management sacking and victimising workers. It is very easy to get caught in the trap of only supporting those workers whose jobs are politically 'sound' from whatever perspective you happen to hold.

While JS is right in saying that the jobs achieve nothing, the fact is what is under attack is not the heads of department but the jobs as such. How should we respond? It is a gross exaggeration to compare these jobs with those of Nazi Kapos (captive policemen)—even the worst councils do not employ people to whip workers into line or select them for extermination. A far better comparison would be with social workers, income tax administration, Cheltenham GCHQ, DSS clerks and all the other useless and basically parasitic jobs workers do in a society they don't control. We cannot make support for workers in struggle conditional on whether we approve of their jobs. This absurd attitude was carried to extremes by so-called anarchists during the miners' strike refusing to support the miners because they ate meat.

To make a further point in defence of my article, the Race and Women's Officers under attack at the moment are precisely the ones who are NOT friendly with the local Labour bureaucracy. Support from Lewisham Labour Party for Neville Adams, the Principle Race Advisor sacked by Lewisham's Labour Council, has been reluctant if anything. Whatever criticisms there are of him, it is clear that Neville Adams' view of Race Equality work and that of the local Labour bureaucracy did not coincide. At a Nalgo meeting, he made it clear that he was not a 'rice and peas' Race Officer; the sort who organises patronising 'cultural' events where councillors and their chums can eat ethnic food and listen to steel bands. It is for this reason that he and a colleague were sacked, and the Race and Women's Units scrapped, and replaced by a toothless Equalities Development Unit.

Answers to Quiz

1. After their setback in May 1937, the CNT-FAI organised a military and political intelligence unit to try to combat the Fascists and Communists: after 1939 it was the base of the SIM (Military Intelligence Service) in co-operation with the Basque Nationalists, and responsible for war-time sabotage and espionage in Spain and southern France.

2. The Maldive Islands have no prisons (at least according to official sources in the republic); the few local offenders are banished to a different part of the Maldives from that in which they normally live, and foreigners deported.

3. In 1840, the Chinese Empire took action against British ships smuggling opium, causing war with the British Empire which on victory insisted on the cession of Hong Kong as a safe trading base for British capitalists and Chinese merchants. Later, a lease was negotiated which took in further mainland territory.

4. Abdullah (later Sir Albert) Sassoon moved his base to London and his family included several Conservative MPs, one of whom (Sir Philip) became Air Minister and (though Jewish) a close friend of top Nazi minister Goering.

5. King Edward VIII (later Duke of Windsor); he was hastily brought out of France after the invasion lest he be used by the Nazis and shipped to the Bahamas, but made war-time Governor of the islands to cover up any resultant scandal.

THE McLIBEL 5

FIVE MEMBERS of Greenpeace (London) have been served with writs by McDonalds. This is an attempt to stop them distributing the 'What's wrong with McDonalds—everything they don't want you to know' factsheet, which has been translated and printed in millions worldwide over the last 5 years.

October 16 was world Anti-McDonalds day and protests took place in many countries, spurred on by the attempt to suppress any opposition to McDonalds and Greanpeace (London)—who intend to fight the writs—are calling for the protests against McDonalds to be stepped up.

Messages of solidarity to: The McLibel 5, c/o Greanpeace (London), 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1.

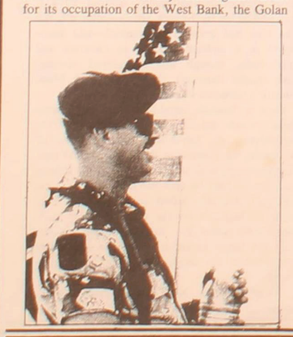
MARCH AGAINST IMMIGRATION LAWS
MANCHESTER
SAT 27 OCT
ASSEMBLE 1.00pm
ALEXANDRA PARK

Middle East cont.

The cruelty of many of these regimes is well known. However, what is not so well known is the support offered and the fantastical justifications given for them by the West. The Americans went to great lengths to back the Shah, and even trained his hated secret police. The feudal Gulf states get automatic support from Britain and the US. Until he invaded Kuwait, Saddam Hussein's crimes (such as the bombing of Kurdish villages with poison gas, and the torture and murder of his political opponents) were conveniently ignored. Since Hussein's invasion, Kuwait has been transformed from a despotic feudal aristocracy where tens of thousands are in a form of domestic bondage akin to slavery, and where workers are regularly flogged, into a 'democracy'.

It is obvious to anyone who wants to see that Kuwait is not a democracy, and that troops are only on the Saudi border because of the threat to the West's oil supplies. The United States pronouncements on human rights in regimes they disapprove of look alarmingly shallow when compared to the appalling human rights record of their allies. The case of a Filipina who went to work as a civil engineer in Kuwait was recently highlighted in City Limits*. When she arrived in Kuwait, she was told that there had been a mistake and that she was to be a servant to the ruling al-Sabah family. As she had no money left, she had no choice. Conditions were terrible, with a 20 hour day and frequent beatings. When her contract expired, the family refused to let her go home. When the family visited London earlier this year she finally managed to escape after her male employer, the son of the Crown Prince, attempted to rape her. She is now in hiding in London, without any rights, as she was brought into Britain effectively as a piece of property.

There is the further hypocrisy of the US' speedy intervention against Iraq's illegal occupation of Kuwait compared to its continued veto at the United nations of any action against Israel for its occupation of the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip (since 1967).



Other questions remain unanswered in the jingoistic press. Who supplied Hussein with his modern weapons? Where did his chemical weapons come from? Who installed the Ba'athist Party in power in Iraq? The answers will not be surprising to anarchists. Iraq's massive army was equipped by, among others, France and the Soviet Union. France is one of the worlds prime arms suppliers, and has no qualms at all about supplying any tinpot despot anywhere in the world. This sell to anyone exposes the lie of the so-called alliance between the Western powers. French weapons were used extensively by Argentina against Britain during the Falklands/Malvinas War. Did the French care about their weapons being used against their allies across the Channel? Of course not; they were only interested in one thing—profit. And it wasn't their class dying in the South Atlantic, it was workers.

Until the current crisis, Britain and America were both on friendly terms with Iraq, having supported Hussein during the eight year Gulf War with Iran. The underlying motive for that support had been to contain Islamic fundamentalism and Iran, which was seen to be the biggest threat to Western interests in the Region. Britain extended credit terms to Iraq at the height of the bombings of Kurdish villages. Only a few months ago, the Foreign Office was boasting of the good record that British companies had in Iraq. This is one of the reasons that there are so many hostages in Iraq, particularly British—because British capitalists have been so heavily involved.

Hussein's Ba'athist Party were installed after a CIA backed coup in 1963, and it was only the threat to cheap oil supplies that has made the Americans move so quickly.

What underlies all of the actions of all the countries involved is economics. Hussein needs more revenue from oil to rebuild the shattered Iraqi economy after the Gulf War. His position at the top of the Iraqi ruling class is under threat, and so he has resorted to taking what the rest of the Arab world would not grant him. The Western powers simply want to safeguard their economic interests in the region, which are considerable. Most of the wealth of the seven major oil companies comes from the Middle East, and they are all among the largest eleven corporations in the world. (One of them, Exxon, is the largest). However, the people who profit from the oil won't be the people dying in the desert should either side start the war. As usual, that will be the workers of all nations, preparing to die for the people who sold the guns to the other side.

For more on the role of imperialism in the Middle East, see Noam Chomsky—*The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians*. Pluto Press. (1983)
* See City Limits 465: Gulf Warriors (Aug 30-Sep 6)

Q & A on Anarchism

Q. *Anarchists never seem to have any clear definition of economics of their own. If anything, they adopt that of Marx. Is this because Anarchism is impossible to define and therefore economics of a society based on its principles can only be guessed at?*

A. Economics is a phoney discipline which has replaced theology as the 'queen of sciences'. Perhaps Anarchism can have no clear definition of its own economics (or more likely it has never yet been worked out). Marx gave no definition of the economics of socialism either: he wrote extensively on his view of the economics of capitalism (which many others accepted, though nowadays more critically or not at all, including some anarchists, certainly contemporary ones).



Each economist has their own pet view of what makes the present system work and how to solve its problems. There are as many cults of capitalist economy as there are religions, with about as many obscure differences between some and vast gaps between others. But economics is only explicable under capitalism. Like concepts of religion, comparative economics is only explicable if you accept the basic premises. In the case of economics as generally understood, these are exploitation, a money system, a market (free or otherwise),

Trade, recession, inflation are all artificially created. So is prosperity (subject to the material wealth being there): how one divides it is the stuff of political economics.

A fresh analysis of the crimes and contradictions of capitalism, and a definitive look at how a free society works, is well overdue; but its lack has nothing to do with the possibilities or otherwise either of defining or of achieving anarchism.

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ccc

No.201
BLACK FLAG
FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE
40p
Nov '90

NO WAR BUT THE CLASS WAR!

INTERNATIONALISM and anti-militarism are two of the foundations of anarchism. As such we can have only one position on the threatened Middle East War—a plague on both their Houses!

War is the enemy of the working class, as much as the ruling classes who use it to serve their ends. It is used, along with its bastard sibling, nationalism, to fool people into thinking they have something in common with the parasites who lord it over them, rather than with the workers of other countries, who suffer their own parasites.

We are not waiting for Saddam Hussein to give Bush and Thatcher a 'bloody nose'. We have a much better message for the Iraqi workers—your enemy is at home. The best thing we can do in this situation is to fight 'our' ruling class with renewed vigour. We must do our utmost to prevent this episode being another carnival of reaction, as the Falklands/Malvinas War was. This means carrying on the fight against the Poll Tax, supporting workers fighting back, and particularly the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee, because this War is only threatened because of oil. The OILC has a chance to make some great advances, both in terms and conditions and in organizing a previously unorganized section of our class. This deserves our strongest support.

We reject the ludicrous idea of 'revolutionary defeatism' as applied by British marxists. We do not expect the Iraqi working class to sacrifice itself in the trenches so that our bosses are given a proverbial 'bloody nose'. True, we would like to see Thatcher, Bush and all the rest of them suffer, but that won't be achieved militarily. We'd like to remind the Marxists that the power to change society lies with the working class, not with the army of another ruling class. Militarism has always been opposed by anarchists, and it always will be.

Saddam Hussein is a murderous butcher. We will not defend him, simply because some people, who have lost their way politically, are naive enough to think 'my enemy's enemy is my friend'. If Saddam goes, there will just be another tinpot despot to replace him. Only the Iraqi working class is capable of getting rid of dictatorship. We can only urge them and the working class of all countries to act, not as cannon fodder, but as revolutionaries, shaping their own destiny, and to make history.



GOD BLESS AMERICA GOD BLESS THE RICH GOD BLESS THE MINIMUM WAGE

~ MIDDLE EAST — SEE PAGE 4 ~

USSR

VICTORY TO RUSSIAN SYNDICALISTS

THE DIFFICULTIES of organising in the Soviet Union remain. However, the case of Victor Kassatkin illustrates how these can be overcome. Victor Kassatkin is a member of the SMOT (Free General Workers' Union). Union).

On 5th August 1990, Victor Kassatkin was dismissed from his job, deprived of his apartment and his ration card, for having organised an independent syndicate in the Tosno railway depot in Leningrad. As a mark of protest, Victor Kassatkin started a hunger strike. The SMOT turned to the international labour movement and independent organisations to ask for support for the independent railway workers syndicate at the Tosno depot, and for its founder, Victor Kassatkin.

After an appeal for letters and telegrams of protest to the authorities, Kassatkin won all of his demands. He has regained his job, apartment and ration card, and called off his hunger strike.

The SMOT information agency in Paris said that pressure from the international anarchist movement certainly played a part in SMOT's victory. SMOT urgently need material to aid them in their struggle. Particularly useful is paper and photocopier toner (Rank Xerox 310 Type H Toner—which is unobtainable in the U.S.S.R.). Other items of stationery and exchange of publications are also welcome.

Daily repression continues of anarchists and syndicalists in the U.S.S.R. It frequently takes the form of activists being arrested, held for a few days, released, then re-arrested. This has happened to a leader of an independent union in Leningrad. Petrov, of the LPOAT (Leningrad Bus and Transport Union) was arrested on 26th September. There are no more details as we go to press, we'll bring you an update in the next issue.

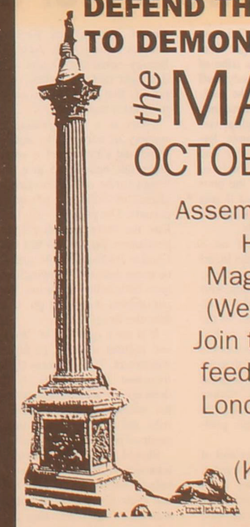
Contact: SMOT Information Agency, Alexander Tchukaev, c/o Librairie de Monde Libertaire, 145, rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France.



Members and sympathisers of the SMOT protesting in Leningrad

PAY NO POLL TAX

SUPPORT THE TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANTS
DEFEND THE RIGHT TO DEMONSTRATE



the MARCH
OCTOBER 20TH

Assemble 9:30-10:30
Horseferry Road
Magistarates Court
(Westminster Tube)
Join the defendants' feeder March to the London Anti-Poll Tax demonstration
(Kennington Park 12noon)

Organised by the Trafalgar Square Defendant's Campaign, c/o Haldane Society, 205 Panther House, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X 0AP Tel 071-833-8958

SUPPORT THE TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEFENDANTS

TSDC UPDATE

THE FIRST FLUSH of magistrate court cases has now died down to a trickle and the campaign is now preparing for the major show trials of those on riot charges. The first wave of cases has shown us what to expect from those who sit in judgement. Although the rate of conviction (about 70%) is an improvement on the usual rate of conviction from magistrates courts (95%), severity of sentencing is unprecented. A common charge such as 'Threatening behaviour or language' (Section 4 Public Order Act) normally carries a penalty of a fine or a bind-over for first offences, Trafalgar Square defendants have been receiving 21 or 28 day prison sentences in nearly all cases. This informal sentencing policy is being carried out by a small group of stipendiary magistrates (professional magistrates at the top of the hierarchy who are allowed to act as judge and jury on their own, answerable to no one). They have volunteered to try these cases and have admitted, off the record to solicitors and court clerks, that they view anyone arrested on the day or after as guilty for being there.

Now many of the cases coming up are crown court trials where the police will have to spin their lies to the more unfamiliar and potentially sceptical audience of a jury. Up until now many of the police have shown nervousness over appearing before a jury. There have been many cases where charges have been dropped down to ensure a safe magistrates trial. So it is important for the State to create an atmosphere that will allow convictions to be hurried through regardless of the actual evidence. The Campaign sees a need, now more than ever, to publicise the truth about the police attack on the demonstration in order to stop the frame ups.

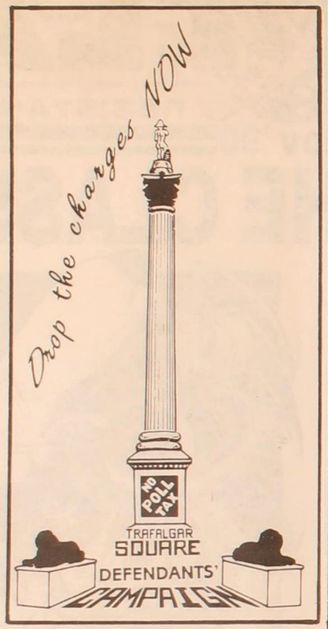
Recently a lot of the TSDC's activity has gone into sorting out the march on 20 September. Originally there was to be no march organised, so the Campaign proposed to hold one in conjunction with the London Federation. Two months of heavy wrangling later and the details are sorted.

Finally the following prisoners would appreciate your support:

Robert Robinson, a.k.a. Simon O'Reilly, RA0741, (important to write both names on the envelope) HMP Camp Hill, Newport, Isle of Wight.

Chris Sawyer, MT3920, HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Rd, London N7 8TT.

Paul Jacob, RA0771, HMP Brixton, Jebb Lane, Brixton, London, SW2



Guiness is good for you —but even better for them

THE FORTUNES made by the Guinness family over two centuries brought them fame and power. An enormous tribe of Tory statesmen have thrived on the heady stuff brewed by the Liffey. They have been the backbone of Irish Protestant gentleman ascendancy and English right wing pressure grouping, lavishly contributing to political slush funds. Relating to their strategic charities, the late Brendan Behan was once reminded crossly of all the Guinness family had done for the poor people of Dublin—to which he replied it was nothing compared to what the poor people of Dublin had done for the Guinness family.

The huge brewery in Dublin, held on a peppercorn lease, ran a rigid caste system based on religion (Church of Ireland management, Presbyterian foremen and Catholic labourers) and national independence has never quite broken the mould. In Ireland Guinness is the financial mainstay of the Episcopalians, in England one of the mainstays of the Conservative Party. This in itself is an indication of great wealth going with great power and also of greed going for more power, more wealth, remote branches of the family being rewarded with place, position, fame in their chosen professions, and always more money.

They have no need to go out stealing and of course they never do: they employ financial managers to increase their riches. They hired Ernest Saunders to take over the management of the company. Nothing to do with brewing beer, his role was to increase profits with takeovers, use the acumen of someone outside the company caste system and outside the Establishment to further glorify the wealth of the family.

If the Guinness family had been down and out they might have been tempted to hire a hitman to go out and waylay passers by. They had no such excuse, but they didn't need one. Saunders—in company with millionaire Sir Gerald Ronson and Anthony Parnes, City slickers acting with New York crook Ivan Boesky—used the Guinness base to launch a day light raid that netted so many millions of pounds that even the go-betweens got an odd million for their services.

There is a thin dividing line between the roguery of normal City operations and that of fraud and they passed it so flagrantly that the court felt obliged to pass minor prison sentences (to be served in open prisons with little chance of failing to get remission in a short period). The press bewail, or in some cases relish, the shame and disgrace brought on these gentlemen. But the law had no choice. If City of London trading is to be preserved there has to be some deterrent to swindling or no one would have faith in the institution. So off to a modified punishment they must go, at any rate until the fuss dies down.

It is not a question of 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant', so far as the Family are concerned. The Guinness dynasty have greatly increased their profits as as result of the dealings for which their servant is led off with his fellow-crooks while the worthy Guinness tribe tut-tut and remain intact in their ivory castle of political power built on booze.

Should anybody mention either nationalisation or its alternative workers control, nobody will be louder than the Guinness family and their sycophants in political and religious rhetoric of the immorality of taking over their inherited wealth. While there is no immediate likelihood of either, they will look on taking over companies as part of free enterprise. So long as someone else is in the firing line.

Another English aristocrat and absentee landlord once wrote to his impoverished Irish tenants, 'You little know my temper if you seek to frighten me by shooting my bailiff'. Or, in this case, by sending my manager to jail.

Football Fans Framed

FOLLOWING THE Italian victory in the game against Uruguay in the World Cup, police arrested and deported 246 people (including some ordinary holidaymakers), all of whom were English.

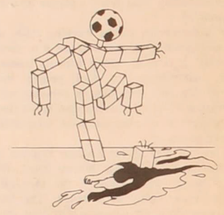
After an incident outside a pub, riot police charged into the bar armed with truncheons, clubs, oars and lumps of wood. Tear gas was discharged inside the bar, and people inside were beaten and arrested as they tried to escape. There then began mass roundups of anyone English in Rimini. Once arrested, the men were held for 17 hours in what one described as a 'filthy bus garage'. The police deliberately played games with them, including telling them that Mrs.Thatcher was going to visit them (that's definitely torture!). They were forced to sign deportation documents in which they admitted to being drunk and smashing up the town. Those who didn't were beaten, and the police signed for them. They weren't even allowed to go to the toilet alone.

A large number of questions remain unanswered from this incident, such as why exactly the same number of fans were arrested as there were seats on the plane? Or why the plane had been booked four days before the supposed riot happened? Or why the Italian authorities told the FSA 'Embassy' (set up to ensure an adequate supply of information for fans in Italy, given the official lackadaisical attitudes) that all the hotels in Bologna (where England's next match was) were booked, why not try Rimini? All these circumstances point to a deliberate conspiracy by the Italian authorities to make sure English fans lived up to the media hype. This was presumably done with the collusion of the British state, as senior policemen and Ministry of Sport officials were present in Italy.

The Football Supporters Association (FSA) has set up the Rimini Defence Fund. The Fund is to enable those who were deported to clear their names by appealing, and lawyers have estimated that it will cost at least $15000 just to lodge the appeals.

Even the laughable Moynihan has admitted that the large number of people involved in the expulsions is an 'unreliable indicator of the extent of the disorder'. Unsurprisingly, the Government is refusing to back the case—perhaps they are embarrassed by it, or maybe it's just pure spite.

The campaign will be conducted through the vast network of independent football fanzines all over the country. However, anyone wishing to get in touch with the FSA direct should write to them at: PO Box 11, Liverpool, L26 1X.



Oil Strike

IN JULY 1989 a series of lightning strikes took place across the North Sea oilfields. They occured on the anniversary of the worst disaster to have taken place extracting oil from this inhospitable enviroment. On July 6 1988 a series of explosions ripped through the Piper Alpha platform claiming the lives of 167 offshore workers. The disaster touched all those working on the platforms and was one of the motivations for those organising the strikes—the Offshore Industry Liason Committee (OILC).

Six hundred workers have lost their lives in the last 25 years in the North Sea and despite the Cullen enquiry following Piper Alpha, safety conditions have continued to fall. Meanwhile to maximise profits from the expensive North Sea fields, workers were labouring 15 hour days, 3 weeks on, 1 week off. The 7 Trade Unions operating in the industry were powerless against the multi-national oil giants and less than 10% of the 20,000 workers were unionised. Faced with this desperate situation, the shop stewards committee of the Tern hook-up realised from their own experiances that what was needed was a rank and file, cross union organisation, dedicated to taking direct action to improve safety conditions in the Nort Sea. And so the OILC was born.

The OILC expanded to other platforms recruiting support, particularly amongst the 80% of offshore workers not directly employed by the oil companies, but those in construction, engineering and catering employed by contractors. Following the actions of July last year, in Jauary the OILC gave notice that they would be taking furter action over safety. In August, 7 more offshore workers were killed—6 in a helicopter crash—sparking a series of 24 hour strikes involving up to 8000 workers. To prevent the strikers being flown back to shore, 1500 staged a 24 day sit-in on eight platforms. A war of nerves commenced with the managers threatening to bring in the Special Boat Service and the RAF (!), while the strikers occupied the gangways between accomodation and main platforms to prevent them being towed away. Following a court judgement, the strikers were forced to leave the platforms.

Subsequently 1500 were sacked and 3000 suspended and foreign workers said to be paid as little as £8 a day brought in. But the actions spread onshore with construction and engineering workers coming out in support. Even construction workers for Trident downed tools.

The oil companies and contractors have now given wage rises, but have not moved on the crucial demands over safety and union recognition. The OILC called a moratorium on actions to allow as many workers as possible return to the North Sea. With the widespread 'blacklisting' in the industry, however, those involved in the action know that it is all or nothing. Unless they win the fight for reinstatement and for a Continental Shelf agreement giving Trade Union protection, regularly negotiated wages and conditions and the right to sit in on safety committees, it is unlikely they will go offshore again.

The OILC has shamed the 'official' Trade Union movement. It has taken on some of the biggest corporations in the world head on is forcing them back. They knew instinctively that a union is built on the solidarity of fellow worers, not on an affiliation to the TUC. As workers in the industry they thought more of the well being of the workmates than the threat of unemployment, while the 'official' Trade Unions cowed by the threat of sequestration of their precious bank balances from which the bureaucrats draw their wages, could do nothing. They have shown the effectiveness of the old syndicalist principles of one industry, one union and direct action. We can only hope that their example will act as an inspiration to others.

Source: Tony G.,Direct Action

Messages of support, donations and copies of their paper *Blow Out* : OILC, 52 Guild St, Aberdeen, AB1 2NB.



Oil strikers march from Mitchell Theatre to BP headquarters.

USA

NO CHARGES AGAINST WOBBLIES

ON JULY 18th, Oakland County prosecutors announced that no charges were being brought against Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney. As reported in *Black Flag 200*, Judi and Darryl were the victims of a car bomb in May. This was an attempt to discredit the Redwood Summer actions carried out to save the ancient growth redwood forest of the Pacific North-west.

The authorities and media had tried to blame Darryl and Judi for the bombing, but they received a great deal of support from both rank and file unionists and environmentalists, as well as international support.

Judi is slowly recovering from her injuries, and has stated that it is the same system which is destroying the redwoods that is destroying peoples' lives in Central America, exploiting workers, suppressing cures for AIDS, oppressing Black, Latino, Asian, American Indian and other people.

We wish Judi and Darryl all the best in their recovery. Keep up The good work!



Judi Bari

Redwood Summer Actions

REPORTS FROM the latest *Industrial Worker* (paper of the I.W.W.) indicate that the Redwood Summer campaign is going well. They state that numerous actions have been carried out and that there has been no violence, either by activists, loggers or the police.

The first action, on June 6th, demonstrators briefly occupied a Pacific Lumber site near Arcata. On June 20th, one thousand demonstrators protested against timber exports at a Louisiana Pacific at Samoa near Eureka. A total of 44 activists were arrested.

At the same time a two day tree sit was going on in a Pacific Lumber old growth grove near Fortuna. The 4 sitters only came down after their food supply was cut down. A 'donuts and dialogue' tactic was also used. Environmentalists turned up to meet workers' at their early morning coffee breaks.

Activists have also held up logging at Osprey Grove, where some rare spotted owls have been found. The sub-contractors due to do the logging are being treated with contempt by the company, Louisiana Pacific. As they are on a piece rate, they will not receive any pay until logging begins. But L-P have insisted that they remain on site, even though there is a court injunction against logging. Wobblies and activists have been raising money to support the sub-contractors crew. One Redwood Summer Coalition activist said that this is a 'breakthrough' in bringing the loggers and activists together.

Fight to Save Malcolm X Site

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY and the Public Development Corporation (an agency of the city of New York) are collaborating to develop a multi-million dollar, commercial biotechnology Audubon Research Park on the site of the abandoned Audubon Ballroom, the site of Malcolm X's last speech and assassination on February 21st, 1965.

The Ballroom was originally built as a vaudeville house and cinema in 1912 in the Washington Heights/Harlem area of Manhattan, and served as a centre for Black and Latino culture during the 40s and 50s, when segregation was still in force. It was regularly used by Malcolm X and the Organisation for Afro-American Unity during 1964/5 to rally the Harlem community to the causes of anti-colonialism and Black Liberation. The proposed Research Park will encompass the present ballroom as well as a number of surrounding blocks. The developers are claiming that it will bring economic renewal to the impoverished neighbourhood.

Financial advisors see biotechnology and genetic engineering as an economic saviour for New York City. Bernard Haeckle of Columbia University cites the development 'as an opportunity to make up for the loss of New York City's base of manufacturing'.

The project will have the capacity for a broad range of research and production, including genetic engineering, DNA recombinants, immunology, pharmacology and toxicology. The City planners have claimed that the project will have 'a positive impact on the neighbourhood'. However, the only jobs likely to go to local workers will be parking attendants, maintenance workers and lab technicians. There aren't a lot of unemployed biochemists (or even employed ones) in Harlem. Most of the jobs requiring any qualifications will go to people from outside the City.

The Malcolm X Coalition to Save the Audubon is a diverse grassroots group made up of various organisations and individuals, including the New York Left Greens, students and staff from Columbia University and local black community groups. They have petitioned, written letters and rallied outside the Audubon. At one such rally on March 2nd, a group of youth organisers were attacked and arrested by police, as part of an attempt by the City to defuse the opposition to the project. The Coalition is trying to get the building landmarked, (a process similar to getting it 'listed' here) which will tie up the City's bureaucracy.



Some elements of the City backers for the project have suggested a compromise where the Ballroom stays but the Park comes anyway. However, this too is being opposed because of fears about the danger and potential environmental hazard posed by genetic research. Nor does the scheme address the real needs of the neighbourhood. They ask the question, how can the City subsidise such a project to the tune of $36 million when it can't find any similar sums of money to address the real social and human needs of the area.

Source: *Love and Rage*, Box 3, Prince St Station, New York, NY10012, USA.

CANADA

Mohawk Nation Under the Gun

THE WAR IN the Mohawk territories of Kaesatake and Kahnawake has exposed the bottom line of Canadian government policy and the uglier side of settler society's undercurrent of racism. Canada's response to the Mohawk Nation's armed defense of their lands has been to send in the army to crush that resistance with no negotiation or compromise possible.

After the initial armed police assault on the barricades at Kanesatake and the erection of barricades across the Mercier bridge (detailed in BF 200), the police police continued a siege of the territories for weeks. During that timenegotiations were attempted, with the Canadian and Quebecois governments dismissing almost any position put forth by the Mohawk Nation. Initially the federal government kept silent on the matter, leaving the whole matter in Quebec's hands, until finally the federal IndianAffairs Minister emerged with the position that 'Ottawa will not negotiate with a gun to our heads'. Anyone who had watched the events of the previous weeks would realise that that was exactly what they were expecting the Mohawk Nation to do. However, negotiations were attempted, only to be dropped in favour of an armed solution by the Canadian state.

The police were replaced by the Canadian Armed Forces and te go ahead to remove the barricades was given on August 27. The Mohawk Nation dug in for the expected attack, while war planes, tanks, APC's and troops manoevered into position. However, a bloodbath was averted when Warriers took down the barricades at Kahnawake themselves in a sign of good faith. Earlier promises of negotiations once the barricades were down were not honoured and the attack on Kanesatake continued. The barricades were torn down without a shot being fired by the Mohawk people. The Warriors that remained were forced back into an old alcohol rehabilitation treatment centre. As we go to press, about 75 Mohawk men, women and children remain surrounded by razor wire, troops, being denied food and (periodically) water, warm clothing and outside communication.

The reluctance of the state to negotiate a solution lies in their fear that the example of resistance will spread across Canada. The issues of sovereignty, so basic to the conflict, are issues which are shared throughout the country. In a sense the Mohawk Warriors have already won a victory regardless of the final outcome.

The victory has also spread to the non-Native population, who in general have been very supportive throughout Canada. There is a widespread frustration with and hatred of this government in particular and the political process in general. However, this has been held in check by a lack of direction and a disillusionment with protest politics. The stand taken by the Mohawk people has spoken to the anger and frustration held by many Canadians, who have been happy to see the government get a good kick in the ass.

Racists used the situation the situation to their advantage—The Ku Klux Klan and other right-wingers organising nightly demonstrations against the Mohawk people as well as physical attacks. The most sickening, resulting in the death of one Mohawk man and the injury of two others, was the stoning of cars carrying old people, women and children leaving the Kahnawake prior to the army invasion.

There have been 47 arrests so far and most recently there has been an army attack during a supposed search for weapons. The Mohawks defended themselves with bare hands against rifles and tear gas resulting in injuries to 75 Mohawks and 10 soldiers.

Solidarity actions have blossomed across thecoutry. Roads have bee blockaded, trains stopped and in Ontario, Chippewa people downed power lines causing $750,000 damage. While the majority of actions so far have been non-violent, the use of arms in self-defense is now being considered by Native Nations all over. It is the last stand possible in a continuing war between First Nations and a settler society determined to take from those nations everything they have.

Ecomedia Toronto

The struggle to date has takena lotofmoney ad will likely take a lot more. Donations are urgently needed and can be sent to the Defence Fund for Mohawk Sovereignty, Account 2638, c/o Bread and Roses Credit Union, 348 Danforth Ave, Suite 211, Toronto, Ontario, M4K 1N8, Canada

THE MURRAYS

THERE IS STILL no news from the Sentence Review Board or the Department of Justice as to a decision on the future of Noel and Marie Murray. Several other long term prisoners have been released. These include two men convicted for the killing of Senator Fox, who had served 16 years and another prisoner convicted and imprisoned 2 years after Noel and Marrie for the killing of Captain Nairac. The Free the Murrays campaign is maintaining its letter writing campaign and asks you to write to:

Ray Burke, Minister of Justice, 72 Stephens Green, Dublin, Ireland and

The Irish ambassador, Irish Embassy, 17 Grosvenor Place, London SW1

It will also be holding a public meeting on October 30, 7.30pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square WC1—nearest tube Holburn, with creche.

More information from FTM, c/o Tenants Corner, 48a Oval Mansions, Vauxhall St, London SE11

Friends of Marie and Noel Murray, c/o 3 Belvedere Avenue, Dublin 1



Wales v Poll Tax

LABOUR RUN Cardiff City council plans to take 10,000 Poll Tax non-payers to court during two weeks in October. The council has effectively declared war on its people who can t pay or won't pay the poll tax.

However, the council has admitted that the current figure of non-payment is near 70,000 in Cardiff alone. 15,000 are reported to have paid nothing, over 3,000 escaped registration, and 50,000 are now in arrears—that's out of a total of 210,000 peopple registered to pay the Poll Tax.

EM Cardiff

Anarcho-Quiz

1. There have been many organised espionage rings against anarchists: has there ever been an organised espionage ring by anarchists?

2. Which would appear to be the best country in which to be convicted of a legal offence?

3. Many governments now are fighting major drug barons, partly because their profits enable them to move into other forms of organised crime—but which country went into a disastrous war last century just to fight drug smuggling?

4. Which Baghdad millionaire banker founded a world financial empire, enabling his sons and other members of his family to become legislators, even a grandson to become Air Minister (and a hunting companion of German air chief Field Marshal Goering?)

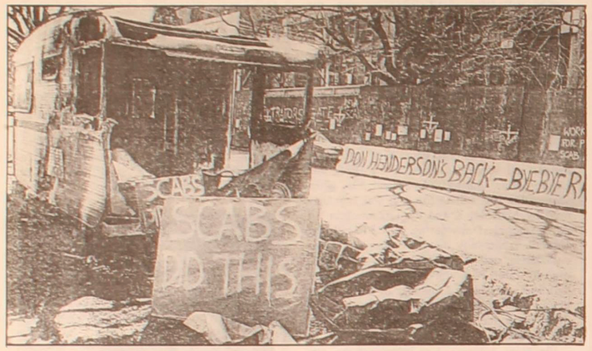
5. Who was the most socially prominent pro-Nazi in England, and what happened to him during the war?

answers on back page

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

AUSTRALIA

UNIONISTS JAILED



ON JUNE 8, 76 carpenters and labourers were sacked from the St. Kilda Road site in Melbourne. A major construction company—Leightons—mid way through a job had told all its workers to become employed by a shady sub-contractor, at less pay and losing some workers in the process. The workers unanimously voted to refuse this, the men were sacked and a picket of the site started, recognised by the unofficial Builders' Labourers Federation and the smaller official building unions, but not by the Building Workers' Industrial Union—whose leadership has been accused of colluding with Leightons and organising scab labour. The company took to the courts and so far 12 rank and file workers have had injunctions placed on them and been sued for $3.5 million. As a result of this three workers, John Cummins, Ralph Edwards and Mick Hartson have been jailed for 'contempt of court' (John Cummins twice), even though they as shop stewards needed to attend the picket line to fulfill their role as workers' representatives.

The pickets have constantly been harrassed by the police and on October 9 the pickets' caravan at the site was blown up. The Australian employers backed by the courts and police controlled by a Labour government are exhibiting anti-unionism that China or South Africa would be proud of.

GERMANY

RE-UNIFICATION CLASHES

THE GERMAN government was going to ensure that nothing detracted from its big day. The disenting voices would not be allowed to mar this celebration to the victory of Capital. The day before re-unification the West German police had taken over control of the whole of Berlin. It brought in reinforcements making it the biggest police presence since 1945. But the anti-capitalists were not letting them have it all their own way. Two warehouses were firebombed causing DM1.5 million worth of damage and a bank had also gone up in flames.

On the night itself, the lone black and red flag outside the Reichstag was quickly seized. But trouble flared as a 16,000 strong demonstration of autonomes, anarchists, turkish youth and other anti-capitalists marched from Kreuzberg to Alexanderplatz. The police using tear gas and water hoses waded in, injuring many demo-straters and onlookers. The protesters resisted, but the police were determined to deal quickly and brutally with these 'gate crashers'. Over 150 were arrested and 110 are being charged.

The police seem intent to continue the repression. The day after a new squat in Kreuzberg was raided and with the files of the old East German secret police in their hands, the left are expecting a clamp down.

MUJERES LIBRES FREE WOMEN FEMMES LIBRES

THE FIRST international meeting of a growing network of anarchist women's groups took place in August in Bordeaux. Many of us had previously met during the C.N.T. Congress in April, where we decided to form the network and produce a regular bulletin. The latest issue includes information from many of the member groups and a report of the meeting. Despite translation problems we were able to agree a basic statement of aims, and a summary is available from the contact address below.

The network is independent from any other political organisation, although we accept anarcho-syndicalism as a basic strategy. Our approach is non-sectarian. Groups already work with other anarchist and women's groups on issues such as abortion and employment rights, and we feel that joint action and discussion within a wider working class movement is vital. Men are welcome to participate in network meetings, though decisions will ultimately be made by women.

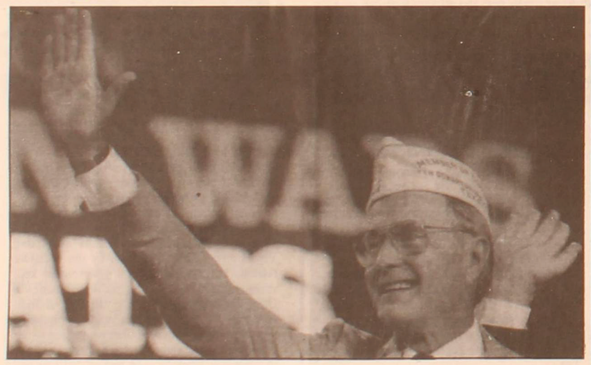
There are group and individual members from France, Spain, Chile (in exile), England, Australia and Germany and also contacts in Switzerland, Belgium and Italy. For more information and input into the network, please get in touch. At present translation facilities are limited, and help is needed, particularly with Spanish and French.

Ashleigh

Contact:
Britain—c/o Deptford DAM, PO Box 574, Brockley, London SE 14 1DL
Spain—Mujeres Libres, C/Union 16, 1o 1a—08001 Barcelona
France & elsewhere—Femmes Libres, 61 rue Pauly, 33130 Begles

THE MIDDLE EAST

A History of Imperialist Intervention



THE PRESENCE of US and British (as well as other states') armed forces on Saudi Arabian soil is not an isolated incident brought about by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Indeed, the Americans and their allies are operating from purely selfish motives and protecting their interests in the region. Historically, the Middle East has long been a political pawn in the hands of rival powers, usually because of its strategic location in relation to trade routes. Countless empires have clashed over this area, which was once incredibly fertile, and has always marked where East met West. Particularly important were the silk and spice trade, and Western merchants went to great efforts to smuggle silkworms out of the area, and thus reduce the cost of silk by producing it closer to the markets in Western Europe. The importance of trade routes in the area has declined, especially with the blocking of the Suez Canal during the Arab-Israeli War, and the growth in the size of ships to beyond what the Canal can cope with.However, the West's interest in the Region is still economic: Oil.

The first modern imperialist carve up of the Middle East took place after the First World War. The Ottoman Empire had collapsed and the British and French took advantage of it to carve out areas of influence, which were awarded to them as mandates by the League of Nations. The First World War had underlined to the West the strategic importance of oil. As Lord Curzon, then foreign secretary, put it, 'The allies floated to victory on a wave of oil'. It was during the war that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (later BP) was nationalised. Anglo-Persian had just signed a deal which gave them a concession covering half a million square miles for a fraction of its true value. Britain drew the boundaries of Iraq to make sure they included the areas where oil was likely to be found.

The allies had also encouraged Arab nationalism during the war, the most famous example being the insurgency organised by T.E.Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia). However, most Arab nationalists aspirations were to remain unfilled. The reactionary Saud family were installed as rulers over most of the Arabian Peninsular (including Mecca and Medina) which became Saudi Arabia. Other ruling families (almost all of whom are related) picked at this time included the Kuwaiti and Jordanian. France was awarded Lebanon and what is now Syria. Britain got Palestine, Transjordan, Iraq (or Mesopotamia as it was known then) and also brought the Gulf sheikhdoms under 'protectorate' status. As in most imperialist carve-ups, the wishes of the local populations were completely ignored, resulting in many problems that still exist today. Several diverse ethnic and religious communities were united in Lebanon. The Kurds were divided between Turkey, Iraq and Persia (as it was then), and tens of thousands were massacred in the process. Armenian hopes were similarly frustrated, after the Turks had massacred over a million Armenians in the early part of this century.

Most of the mandates received their independence in the thirties and forties, and the South Arabian and Gulf states stopped being protectorates in the sixties, although some only achieved it after an armed struggle (as in the case of South Yemen). However, Western interference in the affairs of the region has been a constant factor ever since the end of the Ottoman Empire.

After the carve-up, the US demanded that their oil companies should also get a shot at the cheap Middle Eastern oil, and a consortium of British and US companies was formed called the Iraq Petroleum Company. In 1928, the Red Line Agreement was signed, which gave the Iraq Petroleum Company exclusive drilling rights in all of Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq and all of the Arabian Peninsular except, interestingly, Kuwait. The profits creamed off during this period were enormous, with Exxon making twice as much profit on a barrel of crude as they paid to the Iraqi government.

In 1948, the US set up a consortium called ARAMCO which they allowed to be pro-Arab, and even pay taxes to Saudi Arabia rather than the US Treasury, in order to buy off the opposition of the Saudi royal family to the new state of Israel. In 1951, Dr.Mossadeq, an Iranian nationalist, came to power and nationalised BP's oilfields. The US stopped direct British military intervention, but in 1953 the CIA overthrew Mossadeq and replaced him with the Shah. The fabulous riches amassed from the exploitation of 'black gold', however, did not reach the masses of the Middle East. Most of the estimated 100 million Arabs lived in grinding poverty, while their rulers lined their pockets, and maintained harsh regimes to keep it that way.

continued on back page

POLAND

AS CATHOLICISM increases its grip on Solidarity and hence the Polish government its reactionary nature is becoming more evident. At the the beginning of October, the Senate (99% Solidarity) passed a bill outlawing abortion, which had been available free on demand for the last 34 years. Anarchists and Feminists had staged a number of demonstrations against the Bill, including one outside the palace of of the Primate, Cardinal Glemp and another outside the parliament building on the day of the vote, with slogans such as 'A church monopoly is replacing a comunist monopoly'.

The bill now goes before the Sejm, dominated by former communists, before it becomes law. Polish Anarchists will continue the fight for a woman's right to choose.

GREECE

AT THE END of September, three weeks of indusrial protest hit Greece, culminating in a 48 hour general strike. The protests are against 'austerity measures' brought in by the 6 month old right-wing government and hitting both public and private enterprises brought all of Greece to a standstill. State-owned banks were closed for a fortnight, there were frequent power cuts and public transport was halted.

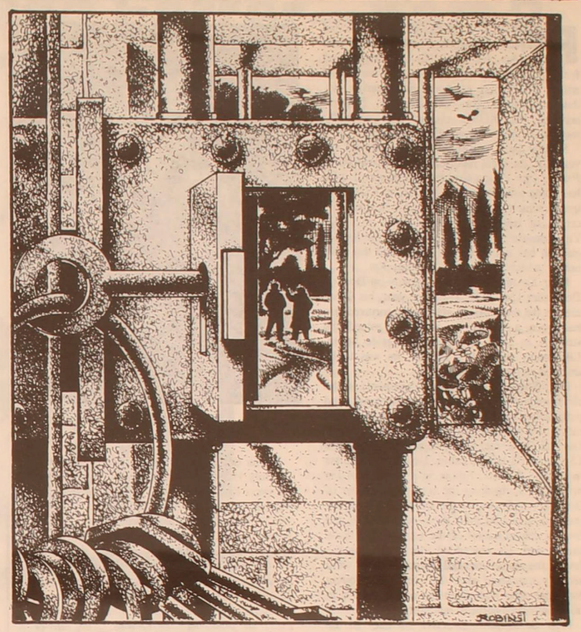
Despite a sellout by the communists, who still dominate the unions, 5 factories still remain in occupation at the time of printing. One, Olympic Catering, has been attacked by the police resulting in 20 wounded and 20 arrests. All the workplaces are flying red flags and black flags and everyone is expecting further industrial actions to break out at any moment.

★MOHAMMED HAMDAN, the palestinian who was accused of planting a bomb on board a TWA plane in 1984 (B.F.199), has won his fight not to be exradited to the USA. He is still, however, in prison and faces charges in Greece.

★OLIVER SALKENSTEIN is being held in Kargdallos prison, dispite having cancer, awaiting extradition to Germany for allegedly being an RAF member. Messages of support to Athens ABC.

Athens ABC,
8 Aristidou St, 10559 Athens, Greece

Poll Tax Prisoner's Diary



ON TUESDAY 5th June 1990 I appeared in court at Bow Street charged with offences under the Public Order Act arising from the events which took place in Trafalgar Square on 31st March. The magistrate decided after hearing statements from two police officers that I was guilty and sentenced me to sixty days imprisonment.

I was not entirely surprised by this sentence and had been preparing myself for prison. I felt that this sentence was very harsh considering I had no previous record of violence. I will now try to outline the process of being imprisoned and my experiences and views on the subject.

When I was sent down I was taken by two custody officers to the cells beneath the court. Here I was badly searched, allowed one phone call and then placed in a cell until a 'vacancy' could be found for me. I was kept here for about five hours until a police van took me and another bloke to Pentonville. Driving through the gates was weird and I started to panic a bit.

Prison Officers are similar types of people to pigs but they are worse. You have to be a sadist to want to lock people up all day and, make no mistake, screws are total bastards. At the 'Ville I was strip-searched (everything off, look in your hair but they don't look up your arse!), given a shower and issued with my clothes—you get two pairs of socks, a t-shirt, vest, one pair of jeans, one pair of shoes, one jumper and one jacket. I wasn't given a jumper or a jacket, so I had to hunt these out for myself.

Probably the first thing you find out about prison is that the screws are bastards. They have total power and can nick you for anything if they want to. This includes them writing a report on a fabricated incident to put you in the block—in Pentonville this is sub-ground level cells, damp, dark, small, with cardboard furniture—when you see the governor/governess you will be punished which can be loss of privileges or remission, or segregation. It's the same style justice as at court: the 'your word against theirs' situation; basically, you lose.

The screws do, however, make excellent objects of ridicule. They display all the stereotyped prejudices you can imagine. One thing I found was good was after meals, whilst waiting in your cell for them to lock the door, shut the door first before they get to you. This turns the tables totally—you're locking them out, simple but effective. They also hate it when someone escapes and prisoners rub it in.

As for the other inmates I met, they were all ordinary people and I was treated very well. I was approached by an inmate who fancied me, but it's no big deal, it happens to me more out here than it did in there. There's a lot of mythology about prison rapes in showers—'Mr Big, what a horrible place, don't break the law' is the message that's constantly being pushed by the scum media (all media is scum—print that). Prisoners support each other and are very resourceful people. They are not thugs. ALL PRISONERS ARE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THIS SOCIETY.

After I'd been in for 26 days there was a protest in Caledonian Road to support people jailed as a result of the demo. I was in 'B' Wing at the time and could only hear noise and chanting. The greater noise was coming from 'A' Wing where people were banging their doors and shouting. When I heard about the demo on the radio was heartened and given a lot of strength to think that people cared enough about us to show their support publicly. I think prison pickets are a good way to support prisoners and to draw attention to the crazy sentences being doled out to Poll Tax defendants.

PRISON SHOULD NOT PUT PEOPLE OFF BREAKING THE LAW, ESPECIALLY THE POLL TAX.

Tips for future prisoners:

1. Food—a vegan Society card is required to get vegan food. Outside help will be required for this. This food (soya milk, oranges, peanuts, Vecon, tea, coffee, peanut butter and bread) is for you to keep in your cell, which has three advantages. YOU, rather than the screws decide when to eat, excess food can be exchanged for tobacco etc., and munchies are always at hand..
2. Drugs—You will be offered drugs by inmates. Get to know the dealers first and then conceal what you can't swallow—you can lose 28 days remission if caught.
3. Razor blades—one can normally be found concealed in the cell. This can be used for many purposes including making collages, with toothpaste for glue (to replace the usual porn?).
4. Other—radios without aerials are allowed, as are books etc., which can be exchanged at meal times etc.

The above article is taken from *Resist!*, newsletter of the Sussex Poll Tax Resisters Support Fund, which can be obtained for a donation from SPTRSF, c/o 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY.

COMMENT

What happens when the poll tax fails?

The case for Municipal Anarchy

COUNCILS ARE IN a one-way situation on the poll tax, imposed on them by a central government which had in mind the abolition of municipal governmment anyway, as the abolition of the Greater London Council proved. Either they cut the services for which councils were provided or they impose an enormous burden upon those least able to afford it.

Conservative councils, or Tory councillors camouflaged as Ratepayer Asssociations, always resented rates, which were local taxes based on the property value of a house. Their aim over years has been constantly to cut down the rates and not 'throw a burden' on the ratepayers. A whole right-wing penny-pinching social philosophy has been created locally consisting of lowering the rates and cutting the services.

Alternatively, the flagship of Labour policy has been the alleged creation of municipal socialism, providing a welfare state within a state.

Now councils have no option but to cut their services or impose the tax. In most cases they will both impose the tax and make drastic cuts. Thus in an instant, municipal socialism, growing since Edwardian times and the jewel of the crown of Labour achievements, has been swept away. Labour councils have to impose heavier burdens of poll tax if they want to keep services. Only those reforming parties with no chance of getting local power say they will not impose it nor will they cut services. But they do not say what they will do if by some remote chance they got local power.

How can we say that people should refuse to accept cutting of jobs or redundancies, while advocating non-payment of poll tax? What alternative is there to poll tax—unless the rates return, or Labour makes a revised version? The plain fact is that people came to accept rates, like income tax, without question. It was dangerous for the government to break the pattern. Now if the people succeed in getting rid of poll tax by non-payment they will never return to rates.

Further, it has to be recognised that the aim of the present government is not just to impose poll tax for municipal government, but to abolish income tax. This may sound good, but what it means is that the whole burden of national administration will have to be paid for in equal amounts through one single body tax falling on every single individual. Services would be entirely privatised. Those with money, increasing with their wealth, would become still richer. There will be joy at abolishing the weight of tax, even at the lower end of tax gathering. But it will be at the expense of the majority of people, and the response is so easy: don't pay!

The key is privatisation. Is there an alternative to it other than nationalisation, regarded as State socialism, or for local services, the municipalisation that has been heralded as 'municipal socialism'? Is that alternative dependent upon financial levy? The alternative is municipal anarchy.

A system which ultimately says that everything must be paid for—if it can't make a profit, it is abolished—will be quickly overthrown. Are people expected to quietly sit down and die for lack of food or air, or catch cholera from littered street because they can't pay for clearing them (or if they can, because others can't or won't? Will they even quietly accept the lack of schools, hospitals, libraries, for want of sufficient collective funds? It would take all the efforts of armed forces or police, to enforce that anti-utopia, which is why they are the last non-profitable enterprises the government would take from us (or it would become a debating society without influence).

If people demand services without taxation, if workers resist redundancy, if councils go bust trying to collect the cash to pay for it, the government either reduces us to gutter-living social levels or we resist. No considerations of responsibility comes into it for the people ('somebody has to pay for it'). Why? If workers who have the real administration in their hands take control of the services like hospital, education, firefighting, building, of course they can go on (and the same applies to everything). It will then become a clearcut issue between retaining the money system or not. The materials are there, the muscle is there, the brains are there, the land is there—what difference does the signature of a bank manager make?

A free municipalised society, while not fully possible under capitalism, would be an advance on State, private or municipal control. The firefighters could still operate, the medical and hospital workers run the health centres, workers maintain whatever is essential to civilised society. Much of it used to be be funded by insurance companies which benefit from their services. Because of a bias towards taxes, and as touching belief in 'grants' as if they were the source of wealth, this has not been attempted, and insurance companies get their work done for them by the community. Schools, hospitals and libraries existed before the councils took them over and made the people pay taxes for what councils decided. Municipal anarchy is yet another leap forward from that: it is the recognition that funding is not necessary if the people as a whole take over the running, or in other words, Work not Capital makes the world go round.

Decisions should be taken locally by the community, with each industry run by those who work in it. Councils, yes; elected representatives, subject to party discipline and Government regulations, no. And to hell with the whole financial racket.



Sheriff officers in Paisley (Scotland) got a shock recently when they turned up to poind (mark for seizure) the goods of a woman in Foxbar, to find two hundred poll tax demonstrators were then in support. With the police, they found it advisable to withdraw. Some Scottish councils have written off last year's poll tax defaulters in despair and are worrying about this year's instead. (Photo: The Glasgow Keelie, P.O.Box 239, Glasgow G3 6RA)

The Death of Piotr Suida

PIOTR SUIDA DIED in the municipal hospital of Novocherkassk, at about 8am on May 5th 1990. He had disappeared from his home the night before, and was found not far from there at about 7am, bearing evidence of blows. He was still alive. This resembles the KGB's classic and cowardly methods of not finishing off their victims.

Several days before his death, he had revealed to the local reporter for *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (the Young Communists paper) that he had come into possession of a secret KGB document which gave the order to fire upon the crowd of rioters in Novocherkassk in 1962. This constituted irrefutable proof of the KGB's guilt. It has not been possible to find this document, which was in Suida's possession.

Piotr Suida was born in Rostov-on-Don on December 13th 1937. The same year, his father died in the town prison after being tortured. He had been a 'Bolshevik, who had joined the struggle in 1902 in Batum, alongside Stalin. Like many of Stalin's friends, he was to be arrested on the tyrant's orders.

Piotr Suida was a specialist mechanic in the electromagnetic factory of Novocherkassk, and participated actively in the workers' protest movement which sprang up there in June 1962. On 10th September 1962, he was condemned to 12 years in a labour camp. He was freed after more than 4 years, following a revision of the proceedings, marking the coming to power of Brezhnev. Afterwards, he led the struggle for the truth to be told about the events of 1962, and for the rehabilitation of the victims and those imprisoned. He assembled information on the fate of the many wounded, some of whom were secretly murdered after the events. He fought for those who had given the orders to fire to tried for 'crimes against humanity'.

Piotr Suida was an active member of the Memorial organisation of Rostov-on-Don and the Association of Victims of Repression. He was a founding member of the KAS (Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists), created on May 1st 1989.

Below is an extract from *Volya* (Freedom), a journal of the KAS, of 1st August 1989.



Piotr Suida

In June 1989, the official press has finally broken its silence over the tragedy of Novocherkassk in 1962, when the army fired upon strikers. So, Komsomolskaya Pravda and Literaturnaya Gazetta (organ of the Writers' Union) have published a detailed account. This thin stream of information wouldn't have trickled out without the efforts of Piotr Suida, one of the 1962 strikers, who has collected a number of testimonies and published the resulting information in Samizdat (clandestine press in the Soviet Union), long before the official publication. Piotr Suida has repeatedly addressed the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Supreme Court of the Soviet Union, demanding that the whole truth about the events in Novocherkassk be told, and that the victims be rehabilitated.

In his declaration to the Supreme Soviet of 6th July 1989, he wrote : *'despite my efforts of 27 years to discover the truth and clear up the tragedy of Novocherkassk (of 1st to 3rd June 1962) several facts and circumstances remain secret because of the attitude of organisations of the Party and the State. Neither the names nor the numbers of the victims and those condemned can be fully known. A sinister silence hangs over the fate of the wounded who were evacuated from the town's hospitals and taken away to unknown destinations. The silence around their fate seems set to cover up those who committed a crime not just against the inhabitants of Novocherkassk, but also against humanity...*

There can be no expiry date for crimes against humanity, and given that it is equally true that the apparatus of the Party and the State are entirely responsible, a detailed investigation of the circumstances of the crime of Novocherkassk, as well as on the slowness of the bureaucracy (18 months to look at my complaints) is actually politically indispensable.

If the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Council of Ministers and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR wish to exonerate themselves of this accusation, they must make public the names of the victims, tell the truth about the fate of the wounded, make known the events, the circumstances and the names of the criminals. In the case of them refusing to do this, we will be obliged to appeal directly to the population of the Soviet Union, through the press and the independent social and political movements, to enlist the opinion of the whole world and make use of the International Court at The Hague.'
6th July 1989.

Piotr Suida, Novocherkassk

This is not the first time that anarchists have been persecuted under Perestroika. KAS member and editor of the journal *Svetcha* (Candle), published in Irkutsk (Siberia), Igor Podchivalov, was accused of hooliganism and imprisoned in March 1989. It is only thanks to the support of Sakharov and the inhabitants of the town that he was freed after paying a stiff fine.

As well as the anarchists, other people have been killed or injured by beatings from the KGB under perestroika. The cases are numerous. We remember Sitnikov, a striking worker from Siberia, who was murdered. We remember Kuznetsov, the journalist who investigated the KGB and who was beaten up and imprisoned without trial. Today he is free, but only half fit, the beating he received having brought on a perforated lung.

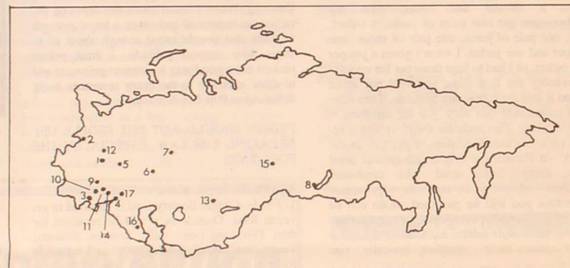
The reactionaries of the Party and the KGB have raised their heads. People are dying for the truth, for their desire for freedom, while the West applaud the non-existant reforms of Gorbachev. We denounce Gorbachev! Fight for freedom of expression in the Soviet Union! We denounce the abuses! Solidarity with the KAS and all the free voices which exist again in the USSR. Do not let Gorbachev snuff them out. Do not be duped. The forces of freedom in the Soviet Union need your support.

Vladimir, Paris May 1990

Notes on the Workers' Uprisings of the '60s

WORKERS' UPRISINGS were numerous in the USSR at the beginning of the sixties. As well as Novocherkassk, the movements which the official press never mentioned happened in Alexandrovsk, Murom, Nizhniy-Tagil, Temirtau, Odessa, Dneprodzerzhinsk, Lubny, Kuybyshev, Kemerovo, Krivoy-Rog, Groznyy, Donetsk, Yaroslavl and other towns.

In Temirtau (Kazakhstan), the revolt broke out on 3rd October 1959, due to bad housing conditions and low wages, lower than those of Bulgarian, Polish and Romanian workers in the town. About fifty workers set fire to the canteen



KEY:
1. Moscow 2. Leningrad 3. Odessa 4. Rostov-na-Donu 5. Murom 6. Kuybyshev 7. Nizhniy Tagil 8. Irkutsk 9. Lubny 10. Krivoy-Rog 11. Dneprodzerzhinsk 12. Yaroslavl 13. Temirtau 14. Donetsk 15. Kemerovo 16. Groznyy 17. Novocherkassk

to protest about the food. Afterwards, they looted the market and threw stones at the militia. Fifteen hundred workers then erected barricades. The next day some soldiers arrived, but the workers were able to seize their arms and the government had to send reinforcements. In anticipation of the failure of negotiations, the order to fire was given. Over 100 workers were killed. The others, including onlookers, were sent away in lorries to an unknown destination.

In Alexandrovsk (Russia), during the summer of 1961, a worker was beaten to death by the militia. The factory workers struck and went to the Commissariat with banners demanding the prosecution of the murderers. After they had stormed the building and set it on fire, they went to the prison where the soldiers refused to fire on the crowd. Special troops were sent in and the massacre began. Huge numbers of arrests followed. The number of dead exceeded one hundred. Some of the arrested disappeared and their families were forbidden from burying their dead. The director of the factory who had supported the strike, the doctor who had exhumed the corpse of the first worker killed and attested to the means of his death, the painter who made the banners, were secretly judged and shot.

These and other reports are by Vadim Belotserkovski. Extracts were published by the KAS in *Obschina* 40, February 1990.

These articles were translated from *Nouvelles de nulle part*, a French bulletin on anarchism in Eastern Europe. It can be obtained from: Nouvelles de nulle part, c/o CNT, 33 rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

BUILDING A TRUE WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The following article is taken from *Zoravy Smysl* a publication of the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists.

IT CAN BE said that there was no workers' movement in the USSR before last summer—we had a Party of the proletariat and Trade Unions, but no workers movement. The summer of 1989 changed all that. The wave of miners' strikes swept through the country. It was the first open demonstration of workers for many years and workers understood that they themselves are a moving force for perestroika. The Government commission, with the participation of the prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, succeeded in preventing the conflict from being prolonged and the miners' demands were taken for consideration.

Out of the Government's deliberations came a document—the 608th resolution of the Supreme Soviet, dated 3 August 1989. This resolution was passed quickly to stem the strikes and outlined measures to improve work conditions and the standard of living. It also aimed to strengthen the technology of the coal industry, to extend the economic independence of the pits and to work out new forms of management. In March 1990, 262 enterprises, including 116 pits, became economically independent. The State bank gave the miners 226 million roubles (£226 million pounds at the official exchange rate) to construct houses and 211 million roubles for consumer goods. But the mining branches reduced managers and workers by 12,800 people (currently around 1030 officials run the industry from a centralised Ministry of Coal).

The strikes of the summer of '89 became a foundation for the creation of new organisational structures. It became clear that no Communist Party, no State and no official Trade Union can protect the workers' interests. Frightened by the slipping away of their power and the comforts of officialdom, the trade union officials made a move and organised the special XV congress of Trade Unions in the coal industry, in March '90 in Moscow. What were the expectations of the miners at the Congress? Concrete actions for the protection of workers interests, said N. Rogov, member of the workers' group in control of the 608th resolution's fulfilment. After the detailed discussion in connection with the account of the coal industry Trade Union's central committee, delegates accepted the central committee's activity as satisfactory. The uselessness of the central coal industry's Trade Unions, though, was obvious, so miners were, here and there, trying to win and take possession of the union's local sections.

In April '90, for example, the press reported from Karaganda, Kazakhstan, that the leaders of the regional strike movement gained election victories and occupied the key positions of the union's section. The participation of miners' leaders in election campaigns made many people perplexed. Why, so recently after the strike committee expressed openly their distrust of official Trade Unions, had they discredited themselves so fully? The strike committee's head, P. Shlegel, explained the contradiction—to achieve much more we must win the Trade Unions and give them back their original fight, rather than to being in opposition to them. The miners' desire to organise an independent, inter-branch movement—Workers' Alliance—appeared.

So, since the Moscow forum didn't vindicate the miners' expectations, the 1st Congress of Miners took place in Donetsk, Ukraine on 11-15 June 1990. The atmosphere was hot. The essence of most speeches was expressed by Yuay Makarov, from the Donbass region strike committee and the congress delegate, 'the Government doesn't solve our problems!' One of the central questions was about the quality of life and the transition to the market economy. Boris Mukazharov, from Karaganda, said, 'I'm indignant that our country looks so rich, but each of us lives like a beggar.' A Karmanov, from Cheliabinsk, said, 'When our branch's minister talks about a regulated market economy, so we think that the word 'regulated' means the desire to preserve Ministry influence.' The Miners demanded the Government's resignation. Congress passed a resolution about the economy and the transition into a market economy, about the fulfilment of the 608th resolution and against the Trade Unions and the Communist Party. The discussion about the Trade Unions was the main one—whether to create a new union or reconstruct the old. Most people supported the former. Y Makarov stated, 'We have heard of the social and economic protection, only an independent union can do this, not a dependent one subservient to the Minister.' V Shvartskop, Chelibinsk coal field said, 'It is impossible for today's Trade Union to exist any further. It doesn't reflect the miners interests.' People said before the congress had ended that 'the main task is fulfilled—we are united.' We must remember that solidarity is the principal thing.
Kommersantz magazine, June 18-25, reported that 'the people of coal regions are discussing at the 1st Congress of Miners a resolution to begin a general strike from July 11. In the opinion of the miners the general strike is the only means to force the USSR leadership to form the 'cabinet of peoples confidence'. Workers committees again reorganised into the strike committees. 'Only owing to the pressure of the people who consider the situation intolerable, can real political and economic changes happen'', miners think.

Maxim Zhuravliev

The Life of Fransisco Ferrer—part 2

The first part of this article appeared in issue 198 (May 90), copies still available. It dealt with the early life of this outstanding educationalist and anarchist pioneer and teacher, up to the point when in 1906 Ferrer established his radical schools throughout workers' centres, while devoting energy to the establishment of a revolutionary labour movement in Catalonia.

AS WE HAVE seen, the Escuela Moderna based itself on certain ideas: firstly, it was for children of all classes; secondly, the payment of fees was based on a sliding scale of paying according to income; thirdly, it was of mixed gender; fourthly, the education was deliberately non-religious, if not actually anti-religious; fifthly, rationality and science were important values which were taught to the children,as well as practical examples used to learn about life; sixthly, compulsion of any sort was totally avoided, and children attended or left lessons as they pleased, and rewards, penalties and exams were never used; seventhly, education was a life-long process, so the school was not only open to people of all ages but even when full-time students left to become wage-slaves, they were encouraged to to continue their studies(education); finally, by using the environment as a teaching method, students could learn by experience (instead of a book), and by observing the environment at first hand, they could also learn about nature (ecology) as well as (capitalist) society's mis-use of it. All of which together makes a massive onslaught on the ideas of patriarchy, nationhood, exploitation of nature, and of people through money (wage-slavery), of religion and so on.

Consequently, this total anti-authoritarian (anarchist) approach made Ferrer a target of hatred and attack from all quarters in Spain, especially as he had such a large fortune, excellent international contacts and help, plus an incredible organisational ability. His earlier revolutionary activities, of taking part in an uprising and of smuggling political refugees over the border, only convinced the Spanish reactionaries that the Escuela Moderna was a hotbed of revolution, violence and sedition, a breeding ground for revolutionaries which would spread like a cancer. The state regarded him as a dangerous revolutionary, the church as a blasphemer, and as a Madrid journal stated, he was the enemy of '...all social foundation: Religion, Family, Property, Authority and Army.'(1)

From the opening of the Escueal Moderna Ferrer was constantly followed; his house was raided in an attempt to incriminate him in some kind of conspiracy, and malicious slanders, innuendo and rumours were used to discredit him his character, activities and ideas. He was portrayed as a financial speculator, gambler and a practitioner of 'free love'. The details of his personal life were also used to discredit him. For example, he had separated from his wife, Theresa Sanmarti, had a relationship with Leopold Bonnard—companion to Mlle. Meunie who had given him the money to set up Las Escuelas Modernas—and later, he fell in love with Soledad Villafranca, one of the teachers at the Escuela Moderna in Barcelona. Obviously, pupils would be 'corrupted' by such goings-on by teachers in their school, so the Escuela and Ferrer had to go. On 4th June 1906 Ferrer was arrested, and on 15th June 1906 the Escuela was forcibly closed. To understand the pretext we have to go back a year.

The Spanish king, Alfonso XIII, was returning from the opera on 31st May 1905, during his visit to Paris, when two bombs were thrown at his carriage. Only one exploded, but 17 people were injured and several vehicles were damaged. The king escaped unharmed. Exactly one year later to the day in Madrid, Alfonso and his bride were on the way home after their wedding, when another bomb was thrown at him. This time 24 people were killed and 107 injured, but Alfonso escaped yet again. The bomb thrower in the second attempt was Mateo Morral, a twenty-five year-old anarchist whose parents were wealthy cotton manufacturers in Sabadell, a textile town just north of Barcelona. However, he worked in Ferrer's publishing house putting his command of several languages to a useful purpose, and had been a friend of Ferrer since 1903. It appears that he had also taken part in the first attempt along with several other anarchists, and had managed to escape the French police. On the second occasion he escaped immediate capture only to be spotted at a railway station near Madrid. To avoid capture he killed himself, but only after killing a cop.



This connection between Mateo Morral and Ferrer was the long awaited opportunity to arrest Ferrer, and close down the Escuela Moderna, much to the delight of reactionaries who proclaimed in one journal that ''...these crimes will continue as long as Spaniards maintain the freedom to read, to teach, and and to think, from which come all these anti-social monsters.''(2) In the Cortes, the Spanish parliament, six conservative deputies petitioned for the closing of all the secular and anarchist schools, including the braches of the Escuela Moderna, but without success.

Ferrer was kept in prison for a year while the state sought actual evidence to connect him with these attentados. In court he was acquitted because no evidence could be found to connect him, so the police were forced to release him, although they remained convinced of his guilt. On 12th June 1907 he was released, and on the 22nd July he left for a tour of France, Belgium, and England, giving lectures on education, visiting old friends as well as making new contacts. In September he returned to Barcelona re-establishing his publishing house, printing and distributing new textbooks, pamphlets and translations of anarchist classics. Although he was refused permission to open the Escuela Moderna, he did give direct support to a new syndicalist organisation called Solidaridad Obrera, subsidising its journal of the same name.
Despite government harrassment he created the 'International League for the Rational Education of Children' a year after his return. This was a Europe-wide campaign to promote libertarian education with support from Anatole France (honorary president), Ferrer (actual president), Ernst Haeckl of Jena, William Heaford of Surrey, Lorenzo Portet of Liverpool, Charles Malato of Paris, Sebastien Faure of Rambouillet, and Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis of Amsterdam. The writer Maurice Masterlink was also affiliated to the League: his plays were often performed in libertarian schools. The League produced a journal, *L'Ecole Renovee*, under the editorship of Ferrer, and the first issue appeared in Brussels on the 15th April 1908, and it moved to Paris nine months later. It contained articles by Kropotkin, Paul Robin, James guillaume, Tarrida del Marmol and Ferrer himself. The league also supported the periodicals *La Scuola Laica* from Rome, and El Boletin de la Escuela Moderna from Barcelona, which along with *L'Ecole Renovee* provided a network of of communication for educators, intellectuals and those interested in education throughout Europe.

In the first issue of *L'Ecole Renovee* its point of view that 'neutral' teaching was a myth was clearly stated: 'We should not, in the school, hide the fact that that we would awaken in the children the desire for a society ...without violence, without hierarchies, without privilege of any sort.' But that '...we have no right to impose this ideal on the child,...' (3) What was hoped was that if children knew and understood what was going on in the world, then they would become aware of the injustices, and then (possibly) oppose them. The principles of the League were identical to to those of the Escuela Moderna and were summarised in the first issue of *L'Ecole Renovee*: 1) The education of children on rational and scientific principles. Anything mystical or supernatural was to be avoided. 2) the education of the whole person. An education based merely on the intellect was rejected. 3) the relation of methods and curricula to the psychology of the child. 4) Recognition the importance of practical education based on the 'great natural law of solidarity'. The League attracted an active membership throughout Europe, because it had such a prestigious executive committee, excellent publicity through its journal and manifestos, and could give practical examples of its principles being put into practice. For example, regular reports were given in *L'Ecole Renovee* about 'La ruche' (The Beehive), founded in 1904 and associated with Sebastien Faure, a well-known anarchist, Madeleine Vernet's L'Avenir Social (the Social Future) also located near Paris, as well as the Escuela Moderna schools in Spain. Within a year of the founding of the League, it spread its membership throughtout the whole of Europe, and helped to set up free schools in Amsterdam, Brussels and Milan. Also it supported those who wanted to achieve changes in the state-run schools, and *L'Ecole Renovee* became increasingly more syndicalist in spirit, and after Ferrer's 'legal'-murder in October 1909, it was replaced by *L'Ecole Emancipee* in 1910/11, where syndicalist ideas predominated.

WHAT ANARCHIST. music form in this century came spontaneously from the working class, was even specifically anarcho-syndicalist and expressed a fervent belief in re-volution?

This was going to be a question in the Anarcho-Quiz but few would believe it without back-up! For it was not the (commercially invented) punk that is now associated with working class youth revolt and individualistic anarchism: it was the tango, long derided as part of the Hollywood dream world of romantic 'Latin gigolo' stereotypes.

In the Argentine at the turn of the century there was a mixture of cultures—a melting pot of the gaucho (cowboy) tradition with Italian and Spanish immigrant workers, reinforced by workers all over Europe. The tango was a a wild dance, peculiarly Argentinian, and a vehicle for social comment—somewhat like the calypso. Nobody of social standing would dream of dancing it (any more than polite French society at one time would tolerate the Can Can, or English society Knees Up Mother Brown).

Though Argentine dance historians of the tango now try to pretend it had no social significance, an entire generation of tango poets (most of them anarchists) wrote lyrics of class struggle to the tango as it was played and danced throughout the slums and ranches of the republic. During the various repressions in the first two decades of the century, the tango celebrated the demands of the workers and their defeats: the Tragic Week of 1919 when the workers were shot down in hundreds (tango: Vasena), the brutal repression of the strike in Patagonia (see the film Rebellion in Patagonia), or the martyrdom of Simon Radowitzky following his assassination of the responsible police chief Col. Falcon.

Many famous tangoes were anonymous—such as the popular 'War on the bourgeoisie' (1901), many are by poets and singers since become well known in South America. They originated in the struggles of the Argentine masses.

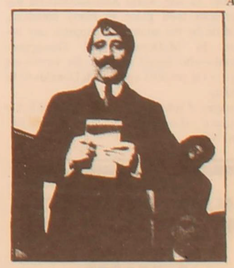
Though the tango as working class revolt never spread internationally, around 1914 it was picked up by French artists—after all, the Can Can had become acceptable!—and introduced in a stylised version in cabarets and music-halls, though still considered 'daring' (like apache dancing), in keeping with Montmartre's romantic obsession with 'low life'.

Then a Spanish republican novelist Blasco Ibanez wrote the The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (a pro-Allied novel about an Argentine who comes to Paris and prefers dancing the tango with fashionable ladies to joining the Army—until he sees the light and goes out and gets decently killed at the Front). Like many of Ibanez's novels, this was later made into a Hollywood film. Rudolph Valentino dancing the tango meant it swept the world and transformed the tango into its 'Latin lover' image

When London, New York, Paris, Berlin, above all Hollywood, took up the tango, even fashionable Buenos Aires finally succumbed to it—though the lyrics were gone, laundered in the international commercial music scene. Yet it continued to be, in its original form and place, a working class form of social protest right up to the days of the Peron repression, and to a lesser extent still.

Like commercialised jazz, it has strayed far from its origins. Imagine an Old Time Dancing session putting on the tango, calypso, jazz, the can can or better, the carmagnole, as they really once were! Perhaps the least likely to be shown would be the tango with its vibrant message of revolution.

AM



A. Ghiraldo, poet and writer of popular tango songs, was for some years publisher of the Anarchist daily 'La Protesta'.